

REMARKS

Claims 1-7 and 9-11 are pending in this application. Claims 8, 12 and 13 have been canceled without prejudice. Claim 7 has been amended for clarity. No new matter has been added by way of the above-amendment.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112, 2nd paragraph

Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Specifically, the Examiner alleges that the limitation "the letter n" in line 2 has insufficient antecedent basis. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

In response, Applicants have amended claim 7 to delete the reference to the letter n. As such, Applicants believe that claim 7 particularly points out and distinctly claims the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

Claims 12-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by WO 02/076924. Sato (U.S. Patent 7,297,289 is taken as an English language equivalent herein) in view of Takekawa et al. (U.S. Pre-Grant Publication No. 2002/0081485).

In view of the cancellation of claims 12-13, this rejection is rendered moot.

Conclusion

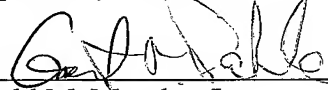
Entry of the above amendments is earnestly solicited. An early and favorable first action on the merits is earnestly solicited.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Gerald M. Murphy, Jr. (Reg. No. 28,977) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37.C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.14; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

By  / #43575
Gerald M. Murphy, Jr.
Registration No.: 28,977
BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP
8110 Gatehouse Rd
Suite 100 East
P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, Virginia 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000
Attorney for Applicant